

Message Text

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SUBJ: IREX VISIT: MIN HIGHER EDUCATION

1. IREX REPRESENTATIVES KASSOF AND MATUSZEWSKI, ACCOMPANIED BY ROCKEFELLER HUMANITIES DIVISION HEAD JOEL COLTON, BEGAN VISIT JANUARY NINE WITH FULL MORNING SESSION AT MHE. SEVERAL ROUTINE PROBLEMS DISCUSSED IN GOOD ATMOSPHERE. MHE MADE FURTHER PITCH FOR INCREASED STIPENDS FOR JUNIOR AND SENIOR SCHOLARS, AND IREX TOOK NOTE OF MHE DESIRES WITHOUT COMMITMENT.

2. MOST SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT WAS CEREMONIAL PRESENTATION TO IREX OF SOVIET JUNIOR AND SENIOR NOMINATIONS, ALMOST TWO MONTHS BEFORE ORIGINAL DUE DATE AND WELL BEFORE NEWLY AGREED DATE OF FEBRUARY ONE - FIFTEEN. SLAVIN, REPRESENTING SOVIET SIDE, APPEARED EXTREMELY PROUD OF THEIR PERFORMANCE IN DEVELOPING 1976-77 SLATE. HE SPOKE AT LENGTH OF RECENT SOVIET EFFORTS TO IMPROVE SELECTION AND PREPARATION PROCESS AND CITED SOVIET EFFORTS AS A RESULT OF CURRENT HIGH LEVEL OF US-SOVIET COOPERATION. SOVIET CANDIDATES NOW ARE IDENTIFIED TWO TO ONE-AND-A-HALF YEARS IN ADVANCE AND GIVEN INTENSIVE PREPARATION, INCLUDING ENGLISH TRAINING AND CHECKS ON QUALITY. KASSOF CONFIRMED THAT 1975/76 EXCHANGEES, NOW IN US, ARE BEST SOVIET GROUP IN

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PROGRAM'S HISTORY. KASSOF LATER NOTED TO EMB THAT RECENT

SOVIET TREND HAS BEEN TO DRAW SCHOLARS FROM UNIVERSITIES AND INSTITUTES OTHER THAN MOSCOW AND LENINGRAD UNIVERSITIES, MAKING LIST MORE GEOGRAPHICALLY REPRESENTATIVE AND FORCING THESE TWO MAJOR UNIVERSITIES TO DEPEND MORE ON DIRECT UNIVERSITY-TO-UNIVERSITY EXCHANGES.

3. SOVIET JUNIOR LIST INCLUDES FORTY-SEVEN NAMES, WITH SIX OR SEVEN MORE PROMISED IN NEAR FUTURE. TWENTY-FIVE SENIOR SCHOLAR NAMES ALSO PRESENTED. SOVIETS CLEARLY WERE SIGNALING THEIR COMMITMENT TO THESE EXCHANGES BY STYLE OF EARLY PRESENTATION. NINE MHE STAFF MEMBERS ATTENDED MEETING, REPRESENTING SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN NUMBER AND QUALITY OF SOVIET FUNCTIONARIES ASSIGNED TO WORK ON THESE PROGRAMS.

4. DURING MEETING, AND IN EARLIER CONVERSATION WITH CAO AND ACAO-EXCHANGES BEFORE IREX REPRESENTATIVES ARRIVED AT MHE, SLAVIN EMPHASIZED SOVIET GRATIFICATION AT SPIRIT OF RECENT EXCHANGE REVIEW TALKS IN WASHINGTON. HE ASKED IF THIS WAS ALSO US VIEW AND WENT ON TO SAY SOVIETS WELL SATISFIED WITH STATUS OF COOPERATION. HE ENDORSED FORMULA ADVANCED AT TALKS OF "NO LESS THAN" AND INDICATED SOVIET UNDERSTANDING THAT POLANSKY AS US CHAIRMAN AND RICHMOND AS EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGES REPRESENTATIVE HAD MEANT PROGRAMS WOULD NOT BE REDUCED. HE REPEATED THAT SOVIETS PREPARED TO DISCUSS INCREASE.

5. AT CONCLUSION OF SESSION, GROUP CALLED BRIEFLY ON DEPUTY MINISTER SOFINSKIY WHO ENDORSED PRESENT STATUS OF EXCHANGES AND INVITED VISITORS TO LUNCH JANUARY TWENTY-ONE.
MATLOCK

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